

Two world-class companies, which have successfully built airports around the globe, today signed a Memorandum of Agreement to finance, build and operate the proposed Abraham Lincoln National Airport at University Park.

"We are extremely excited about the prospects of this airport. We are here today, offering our know-how and resources, to build the Lincoln Airport because it is viable and necessary," said Kurt Eichler, Executive Vice President and Principal of LCOR Inc. of New York, one of the two private developers proposing to jointly finance and oversee construction.

"We are very pleased that this project continues to progress. The initiative undertaken by the communities and supported by Congressman Jackson moves closer to a reality with the agreement we signed today. There are many more steps to take, but working together gives us all great optimism," said Karl Ray, Executive Project Director of Canada-based SNC-Lavalin, the other partner.

"We believe the demand is here. We believe in a commercial development approach. And we believe in providing the best, most affordable air service for our customers. Lincoln Airport can do this, and that's why we are willing to invest," Eichler said.

Under the MOA, the two companies commit themselves to structure private sector financing for the \$200-million inaugural airport -- featuring a five-gate terminal, a 10,000-foot runway, taxiways and parking lot. Specifically, the MOA lays out the roles and responsibilities of the Commission, the developers, and the State. It is contingent upon the Commission securing

control of the 4,200 acres of land being purchased by the State for the airport.

Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr., who has spearheaded the effort, said: "Lincoln National Airport fixes Chicago's aviation capacity crisis and creates thousands of new jobs in the State. And it keeps Illinois at the forefront of aviation as this is the world's first airport specifically designed and priced to attract the increasingly popular low-cost carriers that currently cannot get into our market."

The two companies -- who combined have airport projects or investments in Paris, New York, Vancouver, Malta and other places -- formed a joint venture to develop, finance and run Lincoln Airport. LCOR/SNC-Lavalin Joint Venture was selected by the Commission as project developer in April following an extensive worldwide search.

"This airport will be a great asset for the region's economy and a great asset for the nation's aviation system. Chicago is currently underserved and Lincoln Airport is long overdue," said Jackson.

Airport Commission Chairman Al McCowan said: "We crafted a risk-free, innovative plan that reflects today's market trends but is readily adaptable to tomorrow's. It promises high-quality jobs and low-cost travel that complements O'Hare and Midway."

North Side Congressman Henry Hyde (R-6th), a longtime ally of Jackson's on this effort, said: "This is a partnership Jesse Jackson Jr. and I forged out

of mutual trust and a shared commitment to the region's aviation future. The seeds of partnership that we planted seven years ago have finally borne fruit."

McCowan, who's also the mayor of University Park, added: "A national aviation crisis brought us together. As Democrats and Republicans, North Siders and South Siders, whites and blacks, we proudly say today: Together, we are ready, willing and financially able to build a model airport that will be admired and duplicated around the globe."

Commissioner Craig Johnson, the Mayor of Elk Grove Village, which financed much of the public-private effort, added: "We are setting a new course in aviation history. We started with a successful model, then fine-tuned it into an economical, self-financing airport. As for the need of a Third Airport, it becomes increasingly clearer everyday with flight caps at O'Hare and capacity constraints at Midway."

"The north suburbs have prospered from the economic engine at O'Hare for half a century, and we are thankful for that. But at some point the region will need to build new aviation capacity in a new airspace. This plan -- a modest airfield in the south suburbs -- is the quickest, cheapest and safest way to expand regional capacity without cannibalizing O'Hare," said Commissioner John Geils, Mayor of Bensenville, which also has financed planning for Lincoln Airport.

The Commission -- made up of 30 South Cook and Will county communities plus Bensenville and Elk Grove Village -- in July submitted its detailed "Master Plan" proposal to the Illinois Department of Transportation, which is reviewing it. Jackson and the Commission also have made detailed briefings

of the plan to U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta, FAA Administrator Marion Blakey and other federal transportation and congressional leaders.

After the ceremonial signing, Jackson said: "Talk about the need for a Third Airport dates back to 1968 and the first Mayor Daley. Thirty-five years later, we finally have a plan, the money, and the experts to finish the job. The Southland is no longer the stepchild of the Region. It is the brainchild."

McCowan added: "President Lincoln brought together the North and South to build a stronger union. Lincoln Airport will bring together the North Side and the South Side to build a stronger regional economy."

Abraham Lincoln National Airport Fact Sheet

Location: South of University Park, Illinois, about 35 miles south of Chicago's Loop.

Developers:

* LCOR Inc.: Pioneer in public-private partnerships; Projects include \$1.4-billion JFK

International Terminal 4 in New York, largest public-private airport project in US history.

* SNC-Lavalin: International developer with 10,000 employees worldwide; Built and operates airports in Paris, Malta, Vancouver and is now working on a Moscow airport.

(LCOR and SNC-Lavalin Joint Venture were selected through competitive bidding process offered to the top 84 airport builders in the world.)

Phased Development Plan:

* Phase 1: Five-gate, 142,000 square-foot terminal; 10,000-foot runway and taxiway; surface parking; and control tower. Cost: \$200 million. Opens as early as 2009.

* Phase 2: Fifteen-gate, 340,000 square-foot terminal; expanded parking and new air cargo facility. Additional cost: \$150 million. Opens around 2013.

* Full Build-out: Thirty-six gate, 750,000 square-foot terminal; expanded parking and expanded cargo facility. Additional cost: \$200 million. Opens upon demand.

Financing: All airfield, terminal, parking and on-site development to be structured by LCOR and SNC-Lavalin through private equity investment and non-recourse debt (meaning no cost or risk to taxpayers).

Off-site infrastructure and development of future phases to be financed by airport revenues. Requires no public dollars.

Governance: Airport policy set and monitored by South Suburban / Abraham Lincoln Airport Commission, currently comprised of 32 communities in Cook and Will Counties.

Job Creation: Phase 1 is expected to create 1,000 construction jobs and 15,000 permanent jobs. Ultimately, the airport could generate up to 200,000 new jobs.

Timetable: After all approvals are secured and land is assembled, Phase 1 is expected to take about 30 months, with opening day set for 2009. Subsequent phases to be built based on demand.